

14 killed in attack on prison in Mexico border city



Mexican soldiers arrive at Cereso number 3 state prison after unknown assailants entered the prison and freed several inmates in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico January 1, 2023 [Jose Luis Gonzalez/Reuters]

Mexico City, January 2 (RHC)-- Gunmen have attacked a Mexican prison in the northern border city of Ciudad Juarez, leaving at least 14 people dead and allowing 24 inmates to escape, according to state officials.

The Chihuahua state prosecutor's office said in a statement on Sunday that the attackers arrived at the prison in several armoured vehicles at 7am local time (14:00 GMT) and opened fire on guards. In the chaos that ensued, 10 prison guards and four inmates were killed. At least 13 people were wounded, the state prosecutor said.

Inside, some rioting inmates set fire to various objects and clashed with prison guards, local media reported. The state prosecutor's office said Mexican soldiers and state police regained control of the prison later on Sunday.

At least four people were detained, the office said, without specifying if they were inmates or armed assailants. Details were not available about how the 24 escaped inmates were able to flee, and it was not immediately clear who carried out the attack. The state prosecutor's office said its personnel have launched an investigation.

Violence is frequent in Mexican prisons, including a few where authorities only maintain nominal control. Clashes regularly erupt among inmates of rival gangs, which in places like Ciudad Juarez serve as proxies for drug cartels. The city sits across the United States border town of El Paso, Texas.

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